Buffer zone of Silent Valley National Park

*268. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ENVIORNMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of reports on the buffer zone of Silent Valley National Park, relating to destruction of the area by the ganja mafia and the "Kakkivana forgery";

(b) if so, the action taken thereon;

(c) whether there is any failure on the part of the authorities in conducting the cases properly; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to protect the buffer zone of Silent Valley National Park?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The State Government authorities have detected and destroyed illegal ganja cultivation over an area of more than 100 acres during the current year in Attappady range of Mannarkkad Forest Division adjacent to the Silent Valley National Park.

Regarding "Kakkivana forgery" the Chief Wildlife Warden, Kerala has reported that consequent upon enactment of Kerala Private Forests (Vesting & Assignment) Act, 1971, the property situated in Anakkarananam Malavaram belonging to one Shri Cherian and 8 others, locally known as "Kakkivani" was vested with the Government. Subsequently the owners have taken the matter to various courts for exemption of 95.5 acres from the said land. The Forest Department of Kerala has taken necessary steps to safeguard the interest of the Government.

(c) and (d) The Chief Wildlife Warden, Kerala has reported that there is no dereliction on the part of the authorities in conducting the case. Actions indicating booking of offence cases and making arrests have also been taken.

SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Madam, the hon. Minister in his reply has stated that the Government has taken action against the encroachers. Recently, it was reported that 1399 forged *pattas* have been used and deforestation has taken place at 5355 acres of land. This is what is happening. Earlier, the Secretary, Forests had written a letter to the Secretary, Revenue of the State in regard to this aspect. Now a large-scale encroachment is going on in the corridor of this evergreen forest. It is a very serious issue. Would the Minister discuss this matter with the State Government because there was a big hue and cry with regard to the Silent Valley? Mr. Minister, you might be aware of it. Then a serious debate about environmental and ecological issues is also going on in this country. A very tragic thing has happened there. In this corridor itself, deforestation is going on and encroachment is also going on. You have to take stern action because it is a very serious problem.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, I really feel sorry about it. But I am not in possession of any record or any complaint or any other thing. There is no complaint from any Member of Parliament or the State or any NGO. If the hon. Member sends a specific complaint to me, I will definitely interact with the State Government as well as other concerned authorities and even with the hon. Member.

SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Madam, even the Leader of the Opposition of the State Assembly had sent a letter in this regard. Secondly, *ganja* planation is also going on in this corridor. They are not only cultivating *ganja,* they are illegally trasporting medicinal plants to other places. It was reported widely in the media that, on the one hand, these people are cultivating *ganja* in these National Parks and in the Idukki region of Western Ghats and on the other hand, they are illegaly collecting medicinal plants and sending abroad. Would the Minister take stern action against these people? Would you make an inquiry into the illegal transportation of medicinal plants from the Western Ghats to other countries?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, it is really a menace, so far as this particular area is concerned. We can take action under Section 26 of the

Indian Forests act, 1947 and under Section 29 of the Wildlife Protection Act. This matter is in the possession of the State Government. We will take suitable action.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Madam, they are taking it outside the country.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Smuggling of medicinal plants is going on from Kerala to other countries. What action are you going to take?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, if any specific complaint comes to me, I will definitely take action.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do you have any specific complaint?

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Madam, it is a big menace. It was reported even on the Surya TV. Mr. Minister, your Sun TV took the initiative to uleash the reality. There was a big report in the newspapers. That is why I am asking, "Would you hold an inquiry into it?"

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You hold an inquiry and find out the facts.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, I will definitely take cognisance of hon. Member's concern. I will see to it that some action is taken.

'इफ्को' की इक्विटी

269. श्री उदय प्रताप सिंह : क्या रसायन और उर्वरक मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या इफको (इंडियन फारमर्स फर्टीलाइजर को-आपरेटिव) द्वारा सरकारी इक्विटी लौटाये जाने पर विचार किया जा रहा है, और

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है तथा सरकारी इक्विटी कितनी है?

रसायन और उर्वरक मंत्री (श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा) : (क) और (ख) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर प्रस्तुत है।

(क) जी, हां।

(ख) इफ्को में भारत सरकार की इक्विटी, प्रत्यार्वतन शुरू होने से पूर्व 289.61 करोड़ रू थी और आज की तारीख में यह घटकर 133.00 करोड़ रू0 (भारत सरकार की 156.61) करोड़ रू0 की इक्विटी लौटाने के बाद) रह गई हैं।